



Rep. Harkins presents a citation to members of Stratford's Boy Scout Troop 72 in recognition of the troop's 85th anniversary.

TEEN INTERNET SAFETY

Helpful state website

Recent tragedies resulting from teen use of the MySpace.com website is a reminder to us that the Internet is a fantastic tool, but one where we should exercise particular caution regarding children and teen use.

The State of Connecticut offers a website located at: www.ct.gov/cybersafe to help citizens learn more about safety and security on the Internet.

Another website, www.safeteens.com, includes a number of links and basic rules for online safety for teens, guidelines for parents, blog safety information and a link to the staysafe.org website, which also provides helpful information.

MAJOR TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE

\$2.3 Billion Package Includes Funds For Local Projects

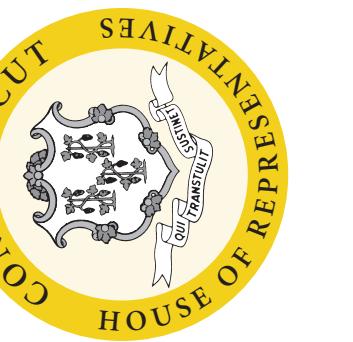
Public Act 06-136 will provide for improvements to highways and mass transit in all corners of the state, allocating \$2.3 billion over a 10-year period.

Projects to be funded include capitol improvements to branch rail lines and \$60 million for new parking and rail stations on New Haven Line. It will also plan completion of a link between the port of New Haven and commuter rails and develop second rail passenger station between New Haven and Milford. The new parking garage at the Stratford railroad station further compliments this bold transportation plan.



Rep. Harkins shows students how the Speaker of the House conducts business from the dias during a tour of the Capitol.

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State Representative



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2006 LEGISLATIVE REPORT



State Representative
JOHN HARKINS
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Rep. Harkins introduces the State Champion Bunnell High School Rifle Team to Governor M. Jodi Rell in April 2006.

Dear Neighbor,

I hope you are enjoying your summer. It has been a privilege representing and serving the people of Stratford. As your state representative, I will continue to work and fight for those issues important to you. I am pleased to provide you my annual end of year session report, highlighting some of the legislation and issues we addressed this session.

Truly Yours,

John Harkins
State Representative

PUBLIC HEALTH

Reducing Hospital Infections

Public Act 06-142, which I cosponsored, will help reduce infections acquired in hospitals, which can lead to very serious medical problems. The legislation creates a committee to develop a mandatory reporting system for all healthcare associated infections. In addition, the report must be posted on the Department of Public Health website and be available to the public. Because this legislation establishes a detailed reporting system, it marks an excellent step toward reducing such infections.



Rep. Harkins answers questions from students on the legislative process during a visit to the House Chamber in March 2006.

SPENDING AND TAXES

2006-2007 State Budget

There were several good points in the 2006-2007 budget package. These include:

- Providing a welcome tax break. The maximum property tax credit on the state income tax, which was scheduled to rise from \$350 to \$400, will instead be raised to \$500.
- Allocating \$190 million to the Rainy Day Fund. This fund, established in the wake of enacting the state income tax in the early 1990s, played a vital role in cushioning the impact on taxpayers when the state hit difficult economic times a decade later.
- To help promote business development, it repeals the 15 percent corporation tax credit surcharge in 2007 and offer tax credits for companies that hire displaced workers and create at least 50 new, full-time jobs.

Under a statutory formula, Stratford will receive \$19,030,917 in state funding for the 2006-2007 Fiscal Year, an increase of \$576,299. It will also receive a one-time revenue sharing grant of \$229,657.



Rep. Harkins and his wife, Jody, meet with Perry family descendants and Diane Toolan, The Town of Stratford's Economic Development Coordinator (at right) at the Perry House. At left are the Perry's Great Great Grandchildren, Virginia Miller (sitting) and Sandra McFarland.

New Funding For Perry House

I am pleased to have been able to secure a \$225,000 grant in June 2006 for additional renovations to the Perry House. Specifically, it will fund installation of a catering kitchen that will enhance the facility's ability to hold meetings and social events. Volunteers have worked very hard to make the West Broad Street facility one Stratford can be very proud of and this funding helps support their efforts.

Saving For Education

The state budget package also creates a deduction on the state income tax for contributions to the Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET--the state-sponsored college savings plan). It will allow taxpayers to carry forward any unused deductions for the five following years as long as each deduction does not exceed the annual maximums, which are \$5,000 for single filers and \$10,000 for joint filers.

Home Weatherization Incentives

Public Act 06-187 exempts residential weatherization and energy efficiency products and energy efficient heating equipment from sales tax for 13 months, from June 1, 2006 through June 30, 2007.



Rep. Harkins receives the Stratford AARP's 'Certificate of Recognition' in May 2006 from Chapter 5824 President Delores A. Zimmer. The award was given for Rep. Harkins' presentation to the group on issues brought before the Legislature during the 2006 Session.

SENIORS

Property Tax Freeze

Public Act 06-176 allows municipalities to freeze the property taxes on homes owned by certain elderly people. To be eligible, the homeowner or his spouse must be age 70 or older and have lived in the state at least one year. The freeze continues for a surviving spouse who is at least age 62 when the homeowner dies. Homeowners must meet the same income limits as apply to the existing state-reimbursed "circuit breaker" program, which currently gives qualified homeowners age 65 or over a tax credit against the property taxes on their homes.

Homecare Oversight

Public Act 06-187 will help protect the interests of senior citizens by requiring companies providing homemaker or companion services to obtain a certificate of registration from the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP). It also gives DCP authority to suspend, revoke, or refuse to issue the registration or take other disciplinary measures in response to violations. These agencies must also require new employees to undergo comprehensive background checks.



Rep. Harkins with Marines at the Stratford VFW breakfast commemorating the 230th anniversary of the U.S. Marine Corps.